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EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

[Continued from page 64.]

LEXINGTON NORMAL SCHOOL.

LEXINGTON, NOV. 6, 1844.

*To the Massachusetts Board of Education:*

Gentlemen,—You are well aware, that there are still some persons in the community, who doubt the utility of Normal Schools. The inquiry is made whether the beneficial effects produced by them have been enough to warrant any further appropriation for their support. As yet, however, they have not been so long in operation, that their effects can be fully ascertained. Some of your own number, Gentlemen, have been so situated, that probably you have had no personal acquaintance with any of the teachers, who have been trained in these seminaries. I have, therefore, thought it to be incumbent upon me, to put you in possession of the information, on this point, that I have been able to gather.

Having had charge of one of the Normal Schools, during the last two years, it will not be doubted, that I have been desirous to know, and somewhat careful to inquire, whether the school was operating efficiently to the end for which it was established. And now that I have resigned that charge, I assure you, Gentlemen, I did so, not because of any distrust of the usefulness of the institution. Far otherwise I was brought to perceive its practical influence upon our Common Schools to be so important, that I thought it ought to be in the charge of one, who has had much more experience, and who possesses much more skill than I do, in the art of teaching.

There have been 243 pupils admitted into the school, formerly located in this town, since it was opened, July, 1839. Of this number, there are 64 now in the school at West Newton; and 25 left at the close of the last term,—August 14th,—of whose success or failure as teachers, we may not expect yet to hear. Of those who have been admitted into the school, twenty have not remained long enough to complete their course; and of those who have gone through the studies and the discipline prescribed, thirteen have, for various reasons, never engaged in teaching. These deductions from the whole number that have been admitted, leave 122\* of the pupils of this Normal School, who have been and are teachers of schools in different parts of our Commonwealth and country. From their success or failure, the utility of Normal Schools may, in some measure, be fairly inferred.

Let it be premised, however, that it would not be fair in the Legislature to demand, that *all* Normal pupils shall become successful teachers. It has been impossible to prevent the admission into these schools of some, who have been found, on trial, not to possess the tact or the temper necessary for imparting knowledge, although they may possess talents for acquiring it. Then, again, the term prescribed by your Honorable Body for the course of training to be pursued in the Normal Schools, has, in several instances, been found too short to develop, and bring into exercise, talents that have undoubtedly existed. It has consequently happened, in several instances, that pupils have completed the course prescribed, and have gone forth to teach, respecting whose ability we have felt doubtful; and yet have not felt that it would be right in us wholly

\* Five or six of these are dead.

to prevent their attempting to teach, by proclaiming our belief of their inability. They have, therefore, been furnished with certificates of good scholarship and good moral character, (of one or both as they have been deserved,) and allowed to go and succeed if they could. In some cases they have succeeded remarkably well. In others, they have failed, as we expected. But the failure of such ought not to redound to the discredit of this institution, because they have not gone from us with certificates of ability to teach. While I had charge of the Lexington Normal School, 54\* completed the course prescribed, and left us; five of whom have not yet, so far as we are informed, engaged in teaching. Of the whole number, 34 carried from me certificates of my confidence in their ability to teach and govern a school. Only two of these have failed to realize my expectations, and one of these two is recovering herself. The other 20 went forth, some of them with certificates, in which no assurance, or only a qualified belief, of their ability to manage schools was expressed; several without certificates of any kind. Five of these are reported to have kept very good schools. The rest have, some of them, done tolerably well, and the others have entirely failed.

In order to procure the materials for this communication, I, last May, caused a sufficient number of copies of the following letter to be printed; and soon after sent one to each of the young ladies, who had, from the first, graduated from the Lexington Normal School.

“LEXINGTON, May —, 1844.

Miss ———, The patrons and friends of Normal Schools are, as might be expected, desirous to know, and be able to lay before the Legislature a statement of the effects already produced by these institutions upon the schools in our Commonwealth. I am, therefore, taking pains to ascertain how large a part of the pupils of this seminary have taught in our schools; how long a time they have taught; and with what success.

Will you be so kind, as, at your earliest convenience, to write me a full account of yourself?

Where have you been engaged in teaching since you left Lexington?

What schools have you taught,—what kind,—how large?

What has been your success? Please send me a copy of any certificates you may have received from those by whom you have been employed.

If you have not engaged in teaching, be kind enough to state the reason why.

SAMUEL J. MAY.”

To the foregoing, I have received eighty-three letters in reply. The whole file I gladly submit to your Honorable Body, in the assurance that, if you have time to peruse it throughout, you will derive no small satisfaction. But lest your engagements should not permit you to read many of these letters, I beg leave to lay before you extracts from a part of them. In my circular letter, you will observe, that I asked no question respecting the government of their schools. This I regret, as there has been consequently a want of uniformity on this point, in their replies. Quite a number have, of their own accord, stated that they have made no use of *corporal punishment*. Five of the eighty-three, who have replied, have stated that they have resorted to that expedient. The rest of them have made no allusion to the matter. Of these, however, I am informed by report, that many have succeeded in maintaining good order, *without the rod*.

Miss S. M. Cotton, who left Lexington the last of December, 1841, states in her letter, dated September 9, 1844, that she commenced teaching in the Centre District in Boylston, and has continued to teach there ever since, excepting one term that she taught in Leominster. Her schools in summer averaged 35 or 40 pupils; her winter school, 73. The following certificate was given her:

“This certifies that Miss Sally M. Cotton, since her return from the Normal School at Lexington, has been employed most of the time in this town,

\* This number does not include the 25 who left August 14th.

in teaching; and has carried into practice the principles of instruction,\* inculcated in that school. And it gives us great pleasure to say, that she has been eminently successful. Her pupils have made unusual proficiency, and her examinations, which we have had the pleasure of attending, have given the fullest proof of the excellency of her mode of instruction.

WM. H. SANFORD,  
Chairman of the School Committee.  
JOHN ANDREWS."

Boylston, Sept. 9, 1844.

Miss Hannah P. Rogers, who left Lexington, March 17, 1841, writes that she has taught school in Billerica, during each of the summer seasons since, in all amounting to ninety-five weeks. The number of her pupils has varied from 57 to 80, between the ages of 3 and 16. She has uniformly governed her schools *without the use of corporal punishment*. The following are the certificates which she has received:

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

"This is to certify that the bearer, Miss Hannah P. Rogers, has been engaged at various times, as a teacher of our district schools, in which employment she has been eminently successful in instruction and discipline. I do therefore most cordially recommend her to those who may wish to employ her in that capacity.

MARSHALL PRESTON,  
One of the School Committee."

Billerica, Sept. 9, 1844.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

"This may certify that Miss Hannah P. Rogers has been a successful teacher, for the four summers last past, in Billerica. Three of the seasons, she has instructed the school in the district of the subscriber.

"As a parent, and as a member of the examining committee, I have been often in her school, and at all times well acquainted with all its management; and I am happy to testify, that, to the parents of the district, and to the examining committee, her persevering industry, her mode of governing, and manner of teaching have given the highest satisfaction.

AMOS SPAULDING,  
One of the School Committee."

Billerica, Oct. 2d, 1844.

Miss Martha Ann Dudley left the Normal School in August, 1841. She has been engaged in teaching most of the time since. She has kept three different schools in South Reading, and has now the charge of a primary school in Boston. She has had three hundred different children under her care, and has in no instance made use of the *rod*, and she expresses strongly her conviction of the sufficiency of moral suasion. The following is a copy of the certificate given her by the School Committee of South Reading:

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

"This may certify that Miss Martha Ann Dudley has taught school in this town for the last two years. The subscribers take great pleasure in saying that she has discharged the responsible duties of teacher, with great faithfulness, ability and success, giving entire satisfaction to the committee, and securing the lasting gratitude of parents, and the warm love of the pupils.

LILLEY EATON,  
THADDEUS SPAULDING,  
EDWARD MANSFIELD,  
School Committee."

South Reading, Feb. 1844.

\* She has governed her schools without resorting to corporal punishment.

*Miss Isabella A. Bowthorpe*, left Lexington, and has since kept school the greater part of two years in West Roxbury. She has sent me the following certificate :

" WEST ROXBURY, Oct. 3, 1844.

" TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :—

" This certifies that *Miss Isabella A. Bowthorpe*, formerly a pupil of the Normal School at Lexington, taught for many months one of the primary schools in this village, with distinguished success. Her *method* was excellent, and the results of her government and teaching were such as entirely to satisfy the committee.

THEODORE PARKER,  
*Local Committee of the W. R. Primary Schools."*

*Miss Louisa A. Spiller* informs me, that soon after she left the Normal School, in 1840, she was appointed to the office of Principal of the lower Department of the West Female School in Salem, in which there were between 80 and 90 pupils. This school, with one assistant, she conducted for nine months, when she was removed to the " East School for Boys," and made teacher of Arithmetic, First Course. In this situation she still continues to labor. The following is a certificate of her success :

" SALEM, October 11, 1844.

THE statement of *Miss Spiller* is a correct representation of her employment in our schools. She was selected to occupy the station she now holds in the East School for Boys, on account of her unusual proficiency in Arithmetic, and her attachment to this particular study. Her ability, as a teacher, is highly esteemed by the committee.

S. C. PHILLIPS."

*Miss Betsey L. Canedy* left Lexington, April 21, 1842, and, as she informs me, on the 2d of May took charge of a school in Walpole, which she kept four months. She then removed to Fall River, where she has been engaged in teaching with eminent success, as the following extracts from the printed Reports of the school committee abundantly testify. In the Report for the year 1842-3, page 9th, I find the following :—" District No. 14, Census 58 :

*Winter School.*—Taught by *Miss Betsey L. Canedy*. *Miss C.* has recently returned from the Normal School at Lexington, where she spent a year. The committee have been particularly pleased with the general appearance of this school. At the annual examination, the committee noticed with much pleasure, the truly admirable order and system with which everything was conducted. A visit to this school is quite sufficient to convince an unprejudiced mind of the importance of public institutions, for fitting teachers for the successful discharge of the duties of their office. The committee could wish, that every female teacher in town would spend at least one year at the Normal School. It is to be hoped that an enlightened Legislature will continue to foster these Schools for Teachers, since there is no doubt that, if they are properly sustained, they will rank among the most valuable institutions of the State."

In the Report for the year 1843-4, I find the following notice of the same young lady :

" District No. 12. First Primary, taught by *Miss Betsey L. Canedy*. This school was opened last winter, in consequence of the crowded state of the Primary Schools in this district. The children in this school are kept under an admirable discipline, neither too rigid nor too lenient. Study and amusement are so happily blended as to avoid most of that uneasiness which so generally prevails in Infant Schools. The mode of teaching is such as to render the schoolroom attractive to the scholars ; and the consequence is, that the children learn, and love to learn. This is decidedly the best governed, and most successful Infant School in this town."

*Miss Sarah A. Lord* left the Normal School, April, 1842, and immediately



engaged in teaching. She has taught two schools in Northfield, one in Templeton, and one in Winchester, N. H. From the school committee of each of those towns she has received certificates of excellent success, copies of which are given in her letter.

Miss Sarah E. Locke, who left the Normal School, April 19, 1841, informs me that she immediately took a school in Randolph, which she kept from May 3d to October 13th. She had 86 pupils between the ages of 3 and 14. The committee gave her a certificate, in which they say "she has proved herself thoroughly qualified for the employment."

She afterwards kept a yearly school in Lexington, of 64 pupils, from 4 to 14 years of age. And afterwards she kept a district school for six months, consisting of 37 pupils between 3 and 13. The school committee of Lexington say in their certificate, "that she has given to all interested perfect satisfaction."

Miss Locke is now teaching a Primary School at Woburn, consisting of 75 pupils.

The following is a copy of the certificate of the Woburn committee :

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :—

"Miss Sarah E. Locke, a former pupil of the Normal School at Lexington, has been employed for a year past as instructress of a Primary School in this town. The school, when placed under her charge, was not of high character, was large and of irregular attendance. Against these difficulties, Miss Locke was obliged to contend, and she has done it most successfully. The committee award her the highest praise. Her labors have been very arduous, yet always she manifested much kindness, and gentleness of manner, and much firmness of command. Her method of instruction is most excellent and thorough, and the committee feel pleasure in saying, that many of her classes have shown as great improvement as any classes they have ever seen. The committee feel it their duty to award Miss Locke their unqualified approbation.

A. H. NELSON,  
Chairman School Committee."

Woburn, Sept. 30, 1844.

Miss Caroline B. Flint, left the Normal School in the spring of 1842. The ensuing summer she taught a school of 30 in the north part of Lincoln. During the summer of 1843, she taught the school in the centre of the same town, 40 pupils. In the summer of 1844 she was engaged in teaching the same school, when she was invited to become an assistant in the high school at Cabotville.

The following is a copy of the certificate of the school committee of Lincoln :

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :—

"Miss Caroline B. Flint, lately engaged in teaching the Centre School in this town, being about to leave us, we cheerfully offer to her, her employers, and all concerned, this simple statement, as the most satisfactory testimony in her favor. Two years since, she taught the North School with such success,\* that the committee for the Centre District employed her for the last season and again for this ; and she now leaves us amid the regrets, and with the best wishes of all, pupils, parents, and also of

ABEL WHEELER,  
JONAS SMITH,  
School Committee."

Lincoln, July 12, 1844.

At the expiration of the first term, at Cabotville, she received the following certificate :

"Miss Caroline B. Flint has for the last three months been employed as assistant teacher in the Grammar School under my charge, in which capacity

\* Without corporal punishment.

she has fully sustained her previous reputation, viz., that of an able, faithful and successful instructor.

W. K. VAILL,  
Principal of School No. 2."

Cabotville, Mass., Oct. 14, 1844.

Miss Almira Locke left the Normal School in 1840, and has been engaged in teaching almost all the time since. In every district where she has taught, her services have been desired again. In the whole course of her teaching, she has used corporal punishment *but twice*, and her schools have been noted for good order, cheerfulness, and an appearance of ease.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :—

"This is to certify, that Miss Almira Locke taught one of the schools in North Haverhill, of which I had the oversight in 1843 ; that her success was such as to give entire satisfaction to all concerned, and was creditable to herself and the institution in which she received her preparation for teaching. Her examination before the committee, and her whole management of the school, was such as to lead us to estimate highly the institution of Normal Schools.

G. W. FINNEY,  
One of the General School Committee."

In the printed Report of this Committee, I find Miss Locke highly commended in two instances. "The Summer School in No. 4, was taught by Miss Almira Locke, from one of the Normal Schools. The term of 15 weeks was conducted throughout in a manner highly creditable to the instructress, and satisfactory to all concerned."

Again ; "In District No. 13, there was no school in the summer, but a very good one in the winter, under the charge of Miss Locke. Few male teachers could have accomplished more in the same time."

Miss Rebecca M. Pennell, and Miss Eliza Pennell, left the Normal School in Dec. 1840. The former has been engaged in teaching ever since, short vacations of two or three weeks only excepted. The latter taught three years. They have kept schools in Franklin, Mansfield, Walpole and New Bedford. In each town they have been invited to continue their services. Their schools have, in every instance, been larger than the average ; and they have governed them *without the rod*. Miss R. M. Pennell, in her letter, dated Oct. 14th, 1844, when she had been teaching three years and nine months, says, "during the whole of my teaching, I have never resorted to corporal punishment, *but in one instance*."

After she had been keeping in Walpole, for four months, a school of 52 children, under 8 years of age, the school committee in the Annual Report alluded to her services in the following paragraph :

"Teachers have learned that their great business is to convince children that knowledge is within their reach,—that they can attain it, and have a sufficient motive to strive for its attainment. When this conviction is produced, a new life and activity are excited in the scholar's mind ; his way is seen to lie clear before him ; and he feels a sufficient inducement to walk in it. We have been particularly struck with the increase of healthy intellectual excitement ; and regard it as, at once, the evidence and the pledge of improvement. The second division of the Centre School has exhibited, in this respect, decided and most gratifying proofs of progress. In this school, we have seen what no words of ours can adequately describe, viz., the superiority of a good instructor over a poor, or an indifferent one. The one is hardly worth having at any price ; and for the other, scarcely any compensation is too liberal.\* \* \*

In the character of the school just spoken of, we have seen what learning and aptness to teach, and entire devotion to the work, can do in the business of elementary instruction. Such a teacher is cheap at almost any price."

Miss Pennell and her sister, afterwards, both taught in New Bedford. The following are certificates given them by gentlemen of that place.

"NEW BEDFORD, Oct. 8, 1844.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

"Miss Rebecca M. Pennell, and her sister Miss Eliza Pennell, were employed in one of the largest and most important public schools in this town, for about two years; and as teachers, they exhibited a tact in governing and an aptness in teaching, which caused them to be looked upon as among the best teachers in our service. Their school was orderly, quiet and attentive; and we believe that none have ever succeeded better in gaining the love of their pupils, or the esteem of the parents of such as were put under their care. Miss R. M. Pennell subsequently filled the place of assistant in our high school. In that station, also, we believe she acquitted herself to the entire satisfaction of the committee. If the Normal Schools can furnish such teachers for the children of the Commonwealth, they deserve, and will receive the support of every friend of popular education.

WM. H. TAYLOR,  
JAMES B. CONGDON,  
WM. C. TABER,  
BENJ. CONGDON,  
THOMAS B. BUSH,

*Late School Committee of the town of New Bedford."*

"NEW BEDFORD, HIGH SCHOOL, Oct. 11, 1844.

"I am happy to state to whom it may concern, that Miss R. M. Pennell, while connected with me, as an assistant teacher, gave me entire satisfaction in the discharge her duties. \* \* \* I consider her well qualified, and eminently fitted to give instruction to the young. Her success in New Bedford justifies me in the use of this language. \* \* \* I should rejoice to labor side by side with one, whose mode of instruction, discipline and general management gave me so much satisfaction.

JOHN F. EMERSON, *Master."*

From New Bedford, Miss R. M. Pennell removed to Walpole, and took charge of the 1st division of the Centre School. Miss Eliza Pennell was at the same time, or had been, the teacher of another of the public schools of the town; the following certificate shows with what success:

"The subscribers, school committee of Walpole, Mass., have employed Miss Rebecca M. Pennell, and Miss Eliza Pennell, as teachers in two of the public schools of the town. The schools have had an unusual prosperity under their care. To sufficient intellectual qualifications, they have added a peculiar tact in gaining the affections of the pupils, and have maintained the necessary discipline without severity or harshness. Their influence upon the manners and morals of the scholars has been of the most desirable character. We consider ourselves fortunate in securing their services.

JOHN M. MERRICK,  
ASAHEL BIGELOW."

Walpole, Oct. 9, 1844.

Four of the Normal pupils, Misses Swift, E. A. Rogers, Wight and Coolidge, have been employed as teachers in the Institution for the Blind,—to what acceptance, may be learnt from the following:—

"BOSTON, October 14, 1844.

"MR. MAY,

"DEAR SIR,—It gives me great pleasure to answer your inquiries respecting the young ladies from the Lexington Normal School, who have been employed here as teachers.

"We have employed four of them, and three are now in our service. They have all proved to be able and efficient teachers. Before employing teachers from the Normal Schools we had experienced much difficulty in procuring persons, who could adapt themselves to the peculiar method used with the blind; but with the Normal pupils no such difficulty has existed; and I account for it only by the fact, that the latter were well acquainted with the principles of teaching, while our former assistants were used only to the routine.

"Indeed, after the success of the first teacher from the Normal School, I advised a young lady, who was then trying to teach in our institution, but not very successfully, (although her natural capacity was good,) to go to Lexington and study awhile. She did so, and after about a year returned, resumed her duties and became an excellent teacher. The change and improvement, which had been effected in her case, were so marked, that had I never had any other evidence of the excellence of the Normal School, I should have been inclined to admit it.

"I have the honor to be, dear sir, very truly yours,

S. G. HOWE."

Miss Jane Fessenden left the Normal School in 1840. Since then she has taught a district school in Lexington three seasons, five months each; also, in Townsend, one term of ten weeks, and in Woburn one term and a half.

The following are copies of the certificates she has received:

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

"This certifies that one of the district schools in this town has been taught by Miss Jane Fessenden, during the last three summers. The rapid improvement and thorough knowledge of her pupils, in the various branches taught, were highly satisfactory to the district, and at the close of the school received the unqualified approbation of the committee. It gives me pleasure to recommend her as a faithful and successful teacher.

CHARLES TIDD,

*Secretary of the School Committee."*

Lexington, Sept. 1, 1844.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

"Miss Jane Fessenden of Lexington, a former pupil of the Normal School, has had charge of a primary school in this town for several months. The committee have been fully satisfied with the results of Miss Fessenden's school, and with the progress which has been manifested from the very commencement. Her government is perfect, kind, gentle, and yet sufficiently stringent.\* Her method of instruction is very clear and thorough. Her explanations are peculiarly suited to the comprehension of scholars; and the whole result has been most satisfactory to the pupils, the parents and the committee. The committee desire to give Miss Fessenden their unqualified approbation.

A. H. NELSON,

*Chairman of the School Committee."*

Woburn, Oct. 5, 1844.

Miss Mary E. Fiske gives the following statement in her letter. "I left the Normal School August 18, 1841. I commenced teaching in my native village, (East Lexington,) November 29, 1841, at the age of 17, and here I have taught the primary and grammar schools alternately up to the present time. The weeks that have elapsed between these schools, I have been engaged in teaching private schools, in the same place. My primary schools have varied from 53 to 58 pupils, from 3 to 10 years of age. My grammar schools from 65 to 69 pupils, from 7 to 21. My private schools have varied from 40 to 71 pupils, from 3 to 21 years of age.

"When I commenced teaching, so much opposition to Normal principles was manifested in the district, I feared I should not succeed. I have had some severe trials, but in every instance I have overcome them, *without resorting to the rod*, and feel conscious that I have carried out what I have professed. For further particulars, I refer you to the committees, and to the parents of the children I have had under my charge."

I have not asked for any certificates of her success. It is known and acknowledged generally; and the fact that she has been employed as a teacher

\* Without corporal punishment.



in the same district for more than three years, is alone sufficient evidence of the estimation in which she is held.

Miss Catharine R. Nelson left the Normal School in April, 1842,—and has since taught a school of 68 pupils, during eight months, in Lexington, and a school of 50, for three months, in Woburn.

The following certificate was given her by the committee of the former town:

“This certifies that the Centre District School in this town was taught during the last two terms by Miss Catharine R. Nelson. Although the school was one which required more than ordinary disciplinary powers on the part of the teacher, yet it was distinguished for good order,—not the effect of severity, but of that happy union of mildness and firmness, which secured the love, without diminishing the respect, of the pupils. The improvement and thoroughness of her pupils, in the various branches pursued, were highly satisfactory to the district, and at the close, received the unqualified approbation of the committee. We believe that in Miss Nelson, are happily united the natural and acquired qualifications of a good instructress.

By order of the school committee,

CHARLES TIDD, Secretary.”

Lexington, April 11, 1844.

The following letter is from A. G. Mead, Esq., of Brattleboro', Vt. It contains high commendation of three of the Normal pupils, who have successively taught in that town.

“BRATTLEBORO', Vt., Oct. 8, 1844.

“MR. MAY:—I am told you propose presenting to the Legislature of Massachusetts, some account of the success of the pupils of the Lexington Normal School in teaching; and I have been requested to speak of those who have taught in this place.

“We have had three teachers from Lexington. Miss Emily Johnson was the pioneer, and was eminently successful. She introduced the system of instruction in which she had been trained at Lexington, and we approved it so much, that it was introduced into the three other schools of our village. We feel much indebted to her, both for the excellent system of instruction she introduced amongst us, and for the able and faithful manner in which she carried it out.

“Last year Miss Delia Damon, from your school, taught here one term,—long enough, however, to convince me that she is well qualified for the business, and in a good school, would make a valuable teacher.

During the spring term of the present year, Miss M. A. E. Davis, of Lexington, taught in one of our Common Schools; and gave the most perfect satisfaction to the committee who employed her, and who frequently visited her school.

A. G. MEAD,

Chairman of School Committee.”

I have valuable testimonials of the success of Miss Johnson, as a teacher in South Reading and in Lexington, of Miss Damon's success in West Cambridge, and of Miss Davis's success, in Norton and in Newburyport.

Miss Esther Parmenter, after leaving the Normal School in 1842,—taught in Waltham, one year, a large school averaging 56 pupils, with excellent success. She then returned to the Normal School, and spent the greater part of two terms under my instruction. Since then she has taught during five months in the town of Bedford. The following certificate will show with what success:

“This may certify that Miss Esther Parmenter, late from the Normal School in Lexington, has taught the Centre School in this town for twenty weeks, with strikingly good results. It is a large school, containing only the larger scholars of the district. Her excellence has been apparent, in drawing

out the minds of the children, and teaching them to think, giving clear and definite ideas, and an understanding of the principles and philosophy of what they learnt. This she has done, for the more advanced scholars, as far as one who has tried to do the same would think practicable in the time. With the younger pupils, whose only studies were reading and spelling, her success has not been so striking.

"Her least excellence has been in government, which has not quite corresponded to the other features of her school; though in this, the latter part of the time has much exceeded the former.

GEO. W. WOODWARD,  
S. HOPKINS EMERY,  
School Committee."

Bedford, Ms., Oct. 22, 1844.

Miss Louisa E. Harris left the Normal School December, 1840, and commenced teaching in Roxbury, in primary school No. 4, where she has continued ever since. The average number of her pupils has been somewhat more than 50. The following is an extract from the last report of the school committee, written by the Hon. Samuel H. Walley, Jr. "I examined the pupils in reading, spelling, both from the book and the reading exercise, also in arithmetic and geography. I was very favorably impressed with the demeanor and recitations of the scholars, and I think that, taken as a whole, I never saw a primary school appear to more advantage."

Miss Mary C. Paddock, since she left the Normal School, has taught very acceptably in several towns, as the following certificates will show.

"I hereby certify that Miss Mary C. Paddock taught school in District No. 10, in this town, during eight months in 1842,—that she gave entire satisfaction to the people of the district, and was eminently successful in governing and communicating instruction to the pupils under her charge.

AARON CROWELL, JR.,  
Agent for District No. 10."

Dennis, Oct. 8, 1844.

"This is to certify that Mary C. Paddock taught school in District No. 9, in this town, for the term of 9 months, during 1843, and that she conducted the school entirely to my satisfaction, and to the satisfaction of all concerned, so far as I have ascertained."

JOSHUA CROWELL,  
School Agent."

Oct. 6, 1844.

Miss Eliza W. Thompson has been engaged, during the last eighteen months, at West Cambridge, as a teacher in the primary department of the northwest grammar school. She has had on an average 50 pupils,—and has been very successful, as the following certificates show:

"WEST CAMBRIDGE, Nov. 29, 1844.

"This may certify that Miss Eliza W. Thompson, formerly a pupil of the Lexington Normal School, has for nearly two years been employed as a teacher in the northwest primary school. It is gratifying to be able to state that during this period she has been a successful and constantly improving teacher. She appears to possess that easy influence over the manners of her pupils, that ensures the best order, without resort to harsh measures. The children seem happy in their studies, and at the same time give good evidence of the best progress. From my own examinations, my impressions of her powers, as an instructress, have been altogether favorable. But other members of the committee have known her longer than myself, and their language is more emphatic than even my own in her commendation.

WILLIAM WARE,  
Chairman of W. Cambridge School Committee."

"This is to certify that Miss Eliza W. Thompson has been engaged as associate teacher with me, during the past year, to my entire satisfaction; having been highly successful, not only in the advancement, but also in cor-

recting the deportment of her pupils. Miss T. happily unites those important qualifications of the teacher,—mildness and dignity of character with a regard for right, that causes the pupil, (as the teacher,) to despise deception, and to act and obey from a sense of right and duty.

“Having been a member of the Normal School, her success also adds another to the numerous recommendations of that excellent institution, and to the efficiency of the faithful instructions there given, and enables me to bear my humble testimony in favor of both.

JAMES H. SHEPARD,  
*Of the High St. School.”*

West Cambridge, May 1st, 1844.

Miss Nancy Pearce left the Normal School, in April, 1843, and soon after took charge of the high school in Scituate. There were fifty-five pupils between the ages of 10 and 16. She kept five months, and received the following certificate :

“Miss Nancy Pearce has, with fidelity and untiring devotedness, fulfilled the duties of an instructress, in the high school in this place, the last season. She is confidently recommended as one qualified by her talents, acquirements and moral worth, for any charge in the business of instruction to which she may be called.

EDMUND Q. SEWALL,  
*Chairman of the School Committee.”*

Scituate, Oct. 1844.

She afterwards took a school in the west parish of Gloucester, comprising forty-four pupils from 3 to 16. She kept it two months and then left to take a school in Somerville. The Committee gave her the following :

“Miss Nancy Pearce was examined by the committee of this town, to take charge of one of its primary schools. The examination was unusually satisfactory, and she was most cheerfully approbated. She commenced her school, and, after keeping it for a few weeks, she left it for what seemed to her a more eligible situation, much to the regret of the committee of the district.

“I visited her school, and am happy to say, I formed a most favorable opinion of her qualifications as a teacher.

WILLIAM SAMSON,  
*Secretary of the Committee.”*

Miss Susan Flint left the Normal School in April, 1844, and took a school in the west part of Lexington, which she kept about six months. The committee gave her a certificate of which the following is a copy :

“This may certify that Miss Susan Flint has taught in one of the public schools in this town, and has rendered herself worthy of the highest testimonials, by her success in discipline, by her skill in imparting instruction, and by her unwearied diligence in meeting the duties of her station.

“We freely accord to her our approbation of her method of teaching, and have the fullest confidence in her future success. Perhaps we can give no better expression of our feelings towards her, than to wish that this community might be again favored with her earnest, kind\* and conscientious labors.

CHARLES M. BOWERS,  
CHARLES TIDD,  
*School Committee.”*

Miss Emma C. Palmer left the Normal School in Dec., 1842, and went to take charge of a District School in Norton. The number of her pupils was between 80 and 90, and their ages varied from 4 to 26. A few weeks after, I received a letter from the minister of Norton, Rev. M. Tilden, from which I make the following extract :

\* She has used no corporal punishment.

"Your pupil,—Miss Palmer,—succeeds most admirably. She has more than redeemed the pledge you gave us of her ability to teach. She seems to be the very individual I have been anxiously looking for as a teacher, ever since I have been in Norton. She enters heart and soul into the work, and has already succeeded in awakening an unusual degree of interest in the school. All the pupils seem to love and respect her, as well they may, for to the little ones she is a *mother*, to the larger ones a *sister*,—and to all, not a mistress, but a kind friend and instructor, who, they are made to feel by her unwearied labors, is devoted to their highest welfare. One beautiful proof of the interest which is felt in the school, is given in the very general and punctual attendance of the pupils. So obvious indeed is the anxiety to attend, that one man remarked that 'he believed, all under 40 were going to school this winter.' "

So it continued to the last,—and Miss P. was very urgently solicited to take the summer and next winter schools in the same district. *She used no corporal punishment.*

After a few days' respite, Miss Palmer took charge of a primary school in Boston, which at no time comprised less than 45 pupils, and sometimes as many as 70. Certificate as follows :

"November 11th, 1843.

"In Primary School Committee, District No. 2.

"Miss Emma C. Palmer, having been engaged for some time as the teacher of school No. 3, in this district, and being now, to the great regret of this committee, about to leave the city for another situation, the committee cannot suffer her to depart, without expressing to her their entire satisfaction with her since she has been connected with them in the care of the school, and their great reluctance to part with her ; and while they wish her success in her new situation, they will only express their hope, that she may give as entire satisfaction to her new employers as she has to us.

JOSEPH W. INGRAHAM, *Chairman.*

EPHRAIM BUCK, Jr., *Secretary.*"

She removed from Boston to Hartford, Ct., and took charge of a small select school. Her success there also has been complete, as several certificates in my hand testify. While in Boston, she did in a very few instances, resort to corporal punishment.

Miss Elizabeth G. Mann left the school at Lexington, in April, 1844, and soon after took charge of the Union School, in Scituate. The number of her pupils was 63, between the ages of 10 and 16. The following is a copy of the certificate she received on the 14th of September :

"Miss Elizabeth G. Mann was intrusted with the care of the high school in Scituate, during the last spring and summer. On visiting it, at the close of the term, I found ample evidence of the fidelity, industry and good learning of the instructress. This was her first attempt, made under more than ordinary discouragements. I am happy to say that, in my judgment, the success was sufficient to warrant the highest hopes for Miss Mann, as a teacher and governess in our schools.

EDMUND Q. SEWALL,

*Pastor of the First Church in Scituate.*"

Miss Mann informs me that she used corporal punishment but in *one* instance. On the morning of the day she left Scituate, Miss M. received from a gentleman living very near the schoolhouse, the following note :

"I beg leave, as one of the members of the district, to present you with my thanks for the able and impartial manner in which you have conducted your school. I think that the school under your care has been of more benefit



to the children, than any school that we have ever had, and, I fear, than we ever shall have again.

Respectfully, M. P. RICH."

Miss E. M. Norcross left Lexington, April, 1844, and soon after took a district school of 22 pupils, in Bedford. This she kept 18 weeks. Two of the committee, the ministers of the town, speak thus of her.

"This may certify,—that Miss E. M. Norcross, late from the Normal School at Lexington, having taught a small school in this town the past summer, has shown the capacities of a good instructress:

"It being her first school, she has yet maintained a judicious discipline,—has excited the minds of the children to action in a good degree,—has taught not only words but ideas beyond the average of teachers,—and has shown her own mind to be active in her work, with a due sense of her duty and responsibility in the employment.

"She has pursued a *system and method from the very first*, thus laboring effectually because definitely, and because she began at a point which few reach till after considerable experience, and many not at all. We consider her a good teacher, and think she will become a superior one.

GEO. W. WOODWARD,  
S. HOPKINS EMERY,  
*School Committee.*

Bedford, Oct. 11, 1844.

P. S.—She has not struck a blow."

Miss Anne Maria Whitney left the Normal School in the spring of 1842,—commenced teaching the week afterwards, and taught continuously, with only a short vacation, until the last September, when she returned to spend another term in the Normal School. She has taught two different sets of children. In her first school she used some corporal punishment. In her last, *none at all*

The following are copies of her certificates:

"This certifies that I employed Anne M. Whitney to teach our district school last winter. She taught with great success, and gave the most universal satisfaction of any teacher employed here for a number of years.

"I also employed her the previous summer, and she taught with equal success.

OLIVER STANLEY,  
*Committee District No. 5."*

"Attleboro', Oct. 18, 1844.

"DODGEVILLE, Oct. 17, 1844.

"This certifies, that Miss Anne M. Whitney taught school about six months in District 22, Attleborough, with good success; and gave as good, if not better, satisfaction to the parents than any other teacher that has taught in this District for some years; and the children improved as much as could be expected in the time. With regard to government, I would say she *did not use any corporal punishment* in her school, to my knowledge, though she kept a very orderly one.

GEORGE H. DODGE,  
*Prudential Committee."*

Miss Mary Hopper, of New York city, having spent a year and three months in the school at Lexington, left us in March, 1844,—and soon after commenced a school at Manhasset, on Long Island. On the 15th of May I received the following letter from Mrs. Lydia Maria Child.

"NEW YORK, May 13, 1844.

"MY DEAR FRIEND:

I must write to tell you how much I am pleased with Mary Hopper. I am very much surprised at the rapid ripening of her character. She conducts her school admirably, and seems in excellent spirits, though her task is a pretty arduous one. She has 33 pupils, and many requests for admission have been refused! Her fame as a graduate of the Normal School extends through

the district,—and many families send, who never sent before. *She uses no punishment*, and nothing surprises me more than the order she was able to maintain in such a mixed assemblage of girls and boys of all ages.

"Mary appeared to me to be extremely thorough in her mode of teaching, and I should judge from appearances, that she was very popular among the pupils. She evinces so much firmness, good judgment and self-possession, that I think she may soon take a higher school.

Your affectionate friend,

L. M. CHILD."

A few weeks ago, I received the following letter from the gentleman by whom Miss Hopper was employed.

"MANHASSET, Sep. 26, 1844.

"MR. MAY,

"Sir,—I am sorry that I have been thus tardy in acquainting you of our entire satisfaction in the selection you made of a teacher for our school. Miss Hopper is endowed by nature with qualities that render her a good disciplinarian. She has kindness and gentleness, combined with firmness and a love of order. Her method of teaching is also very satisfactory, and she is eminently faithful to her charge. In short, we consider her *a great blessing* to our community. The number of scholars that have attended the past summer, has greatly exceeded our expectations, so that her duties have been quite arduous. I do not, however, perceive that her health has been impaired,—or her good nature. If the majority of teachers that are educated at your seminary, exercise as good an influence in the schools they may have in charge as does ours, they will have a very important bearing on the future well being of society.

"We thank you, Sir, for your prompt and obliging attention to our requests.

Yours, respectfully,

BENJ. T. POOLE."

I might make many more extracts, showing that others have succeeded quite as well in keeping school, as those to whom the foregoing extracts refer. But the whole file of letters will be in your hands, and can be examined by you, as much as you see fit. From this, and from verbal reports, I have assurance of the success of many others, particularly Miss H. M. Damon,—M. Whittier,—M. A. Russell,—E. S. Fiske,—H. C. Whitney,—M. A. Parker,—J. A. Smith,—M. Weld,—M. A. Viles,—R. D. Viles,—M. S. Smith,—Susan Johnson,—M. M. Stevens,—Anna S. Everett,—and Maria W. Jenkins.

Perhaps you may inquire, why more of those to whom my letter was sent, have not replied. I am able to answer the inquiry only by conjectures. Probably some of the young ladies have married, and removed from their former homes. Respecting the residences of others I have been uncertain; and there have been perhaps some instances of the miscarriage of letters. I have just heard that Miss Burdick, who has distinguished herself as a teacher in New Bedford, has not received the one addressed to her.

It may be thought and said by some, that those of our pupils who have become good teachers, would have become so, if they had not attended the Normal School. Perhaps they would. But you will find, Gentlemen, in many of the letters, that I herewith submit to you, very strong expressions of indebtedness to this institution; and I assure you nothing has been more encouraging, both to Mr. Pierce and myself, than the warm acknowledgments we have frequently received from those of our pupils, who have become the most successful teachers.

Very respectfully,

SAMUEL J. MAY,

*Late Principal of the Normal School, Lexington.*

P. S. Since the above communication was prepared, I have received written and verbal assurances of the success of many of the pupils of the Lexington School, which, if the communication were not already so long, I should be glad to introduce into it.

S. J. M.

Boston, Dec. 10, 1844.

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION.

## TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

GENTLEMEN:—By a Resolve passed at the last session of the Legislature, (March 7, 1844,) it is provided that the Report of the Board of Education “be printed annually before the meeting of the Legislature, or as soon thereafter as may be.” Hence it is necessary that my EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT should be submitted to you, at an earlier period than usual.

The Annual Abstract of the Massachusetts School Returns was completed and ready for distribution in October last. In 1843, owing to my absence from the country, the Abstract for the year included no selections from the reports of the school committees. On the first day of May last, therefore, I found myself in possession of the school committees' reports for two years. Each set of these documents was more voluminous than for any preceding year. Together, they were equal to fifty-five hundred closely written letter-paper pages. Having, as in former years, read every word of these reports, in order to qualify myself for making selections from them, I have the means of forming an estimate of their value. I do not hesitate to pronounce them as valuable a body of school documents as I have ever seen, in any language. In almost everything that relates to the outward organization of our public schools, to the general principles on which these schools should be administered, the necessity of liberal endowments for their support, and the great purposes of public and private beneficence they are capable of accomplishing, the reports abound in sound principles, heartily and energetically set forth. Throughout their whole compass, however, they exhibit abundant evidence that the prevailing views of what our Common Schools should be, are very far in advance of what they really are. In theory, no quarter is granted to uncomfortable, unhealthful, repulsive schoolhouses; while, in fact, many such edifices still exist, to deform the beauty of our villages, to alienate children from school and from study, to sow thickly, in the constitutions of the young, the prolific seeds of disease, and to perpetuate what, by an unnatural union of ideas, may be called school vices. On paper, the reports give us the certainty of demonstration, that none but intelligent and exemplary, self-devoted and self-sacrificing individuals should ever be intrusted with the guardianship of children; but in practice, the school committees as deeply lament as they positively affirm, that the momentous interests of the rising generation, and of course, the future hopes and well-being of the republic, are, in numerous instances, committed to individuals, who are too young to have much either of experience or of judgment; whose opportunities have been so few that they cannot have minds replenished with various information, and who, therefore, are unable to dispense those abundant treasures of knowledge, and to exhibit those elevated and inspiring examples of character, which, if existing in the teacher, would be reproduced and multiplied in the pupils under his care. So too; of the suicidal policy of dismembering

school districts; so of the variety of school books, with its consequent embarrassment, and obstruction to progress; so of the want of a proper classification of scholars, and of many other constituents in the welfare of our schools;—in all these respects what is, contrasts strongly with what should be. It is well that these high standards should be annually held up, and made conspicuous to the people. The thought of improvement must go before the act. The desire and purpose must precede the pursuit. Neither a man, nor a people, wholly content with the present condition, ever betters it; and in regard to all things dependent upon human exertion, where effort ceases, degeneracy begins.

Both the school committees' reports and the Tables of the Abstract, give certain evidence that the people of this State, are gradually working upward towards a higher standard, in regard to Common Schools. Since 1837, the appropriations for building and repairing schoolhouses have amounted to between nine hundred thousand and a million of dollars. During the same time, the annual grant made by the towns, for paying the wages and board of teachers, and supplying fuel for the schools, has increased more than one hundred thousand dollars; and while the aggregate paid for tuition in academies, is advancing, the item of expenditure for private schools, has fallen off some \$30,000. He looks at the working of our institutions with a very unpatriotic eye, who sees, in this last fact, nothing but a transfer of so much money from one column to another, in our educational statistics. Were this all, we might, in many instances, rather lament than rejoice, at such a result; because many of the instructors of our private schools are among the worthiest of our citizens and the best of our teachers. Indeed, many of them commenced their profession, as teachers of private schools, because the public offered no adequate remuneration for their services, as teachers of Common Schools. But this change in the destination of so large a sum of money, proves that more and more of the children of the Commonwealth are educated in a truly republican manner,—educated together, under the same roof, on the same seats, with the same encouragements, rewards, punishments, and to the exclusion of adventitious and artificial distinctions. Everybody knows that the more early and the more firmly a child's mind is turned towards the fact, that his success, estimation, character, in after-life, are to depend upon his own conduct and exertions, rather than upon accident or favoritism, so much the more likely is that child to become a prosperous and an exemplary man. I see, therefore, in the fact here noted, not merely a diversion of so much money from one destination to another, but the evidence of a peaceable and auspicious change in public sentiment, and a sure omen of good for the rising generation and for the race.

[To be continued.]

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